

Honored members of the committee

My name is Barbara Goushaw and I was one of the primary organizers of the Brass Roots Rally, which happened 11 years ago, almost to this very day. It was at that rally the brass contained in this plaque was collected. The crowd – depending on who was making the estimate of course, was somewhere between 10 and 12 thousand people. It was the largest rally held on the steps of the capital building in over 25 years, and I believe that it still holds that record. And everyone agreed that it was the most respectful and well behaved rally Lansing has ever seen.

In 1994, the right to keep and bear arms was a hot issue. Because of the wisdom of our legislature here in Michigan, in recognizing the will of the people, and making certain changes in the law, such as approving shall issue carry permits, that issue is not nearly as hot today.

But, as the pendulum of politics swings back and forth, the possibility that our legislature may once again be dominated by those who do not respect the will of a free people, mounting this plaque on the grounds will serve as a reminder that the people of Michigan are a free people, and determined to remain so. And that the right to keep and bear arms, was not just important to those who drafted the bill of rights in 1776, or those who drafted the Michigan Constitution in 1964, It is important to the people of Michigan of today.

We proved that when we collected the Brass from the guns that our participants vowed never to give up. And our legislature listened.

I thank you today for taking the final step in placing this testament to the will of a free people where it belongs, on the grounds of the capitol building of our great state.